CATHOLIC BOOK WEEK

The Commonweal

February 23, 1951

Niemoeller and His Flock

Conflict Over Neutrality

NORBERT MUHLEN

Catholic Journalism

Values Come First

GERALD VANN

Volume LIII **15c** *Number 19*

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The Commonweal

WEEK BY WEEK

Martinsville Seven

SEVEN men, known in the Communist press as the Martinsville Seven, were executed for a single crime early this month. They were charged with rape. The victim was a white woman. The seven were all Negroes. Each of them was convicted by an all-white jury in separate one-day trials held in Martinsville, Virginia in May, 1949. No white man in Virginia has ever legally paid with his life for the same crime, but 45 Negroes have died like the Martinsville Seven since 1908.

The Martinsville case became known all over the world, though aside from the Negro and the Left-wing press it received minor attention in this country. Communist parties everywhere exploited the sentence, and will doubtless continue to exploit its execution, as an example of American racist "justice" and the double standard for colored and white that still exists under the US flag.

Demonstrations and protest meetings were held here; for days the *Daily Worker* headlined the case; Communist appeals for funds were made in the name of the Martinsville Seven although the Party had nothing to do with their defense, which was undertaken by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. From police-states Poland, China and Russia itself came righteous appeals to the Governor of Virginia and President Truman. Many non-Communist individuals and groups in the US made last-minute appeals, among them the editors of THE COMMONWEAL.

But the sentences were carried out. Four of the men died on February 2. Three days later the remaining three were executed.

Despite their hypocrisy, the Communists said the most important thing that can be said about the Martinsville case: here in the United States, even today, there are places where there is one "justice" for white men and another for Negroes. As long as we are virtually certain—and we are —that the same seven men, were they white, would have received a lesser sentence, the issue of native racism, with all it connotes of cruelty, hatred, injustice and the denial of democracy and Christianity itself, is the one to be faced. We do not justify our own hypocrisy once we have satisfied ourselves that the Communists were not primarily moved by human considerations.

BUT in this particular case, it is frightening to see how the men's lives and their separate tragedies were, sometimes innocently, thought of as something to be *used* for political or ideological purposes. First of all, of course, by those who condemned them out of considerations for white supremacy. Then by the Communists, true to form, cynically exploiting the injustice without shame or let-up. And those who felt that the admission of an injustice would represent a shameful admission in the face of Communist charges and loss of prestige were willing to see the men die rather than own up to our own wickedness. Other groups sincerely urged mercy and added, as the NAACP did, that commutation of the sentence would likewise be "in the interest of national security at a time when our country needs the understanding and support of non-white nations throughout the world."

Time magazine belabored the Communists' hypocrisy for several paragraphs and then piously quoted Governor Battle, as if the real issue were thereby clearly solved, "These people were not convicted because they were Negroes. Neither should they be released because they are Negroes." The unwary Timereader might have concluded that the sentence represented a triumph of American justice.

At the other extreme, pacifist, anarchist Robert Ludlow in *The Catholic Worker* ended his account of the case with: "In this 'democracy,' in this land of liberty, in this State which is so concerned about the morality of other

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• NEXT WEEK •

F. H. DRINKWATER discusses the ethics of the pacifist position and the morality of modern war.

After presenting the traditional Christian doctrine of the just war, Father Drinkwater defends it by answering a series of pacifist objections to its general relevancy and to its application now. He devotes special attention to problems of conscience raised by the atom bomb.

peoples that it must police the world to see that justice prevails, in this nation of 'Christian' peoples, seven men are murdered because their skin is darker than those who control the government."

It would be hard to say whether this heavy-handed irresponsibility or *Time's* airy dismissal represents the more frightening sign of the times.

Japan's New Status

THE mission of Ambassador Dulles to the Far East is particularly concerned with the future of Japan. That country is technically the most advanced of all the nations of the Orient. It has one of the four major non-American industrial concentrations outside the Iron Curtain. With the Ruhr, France and the Low Countries, and the British midlands, it is one of the areas that now attracts a comparatively unindustrialized Russia as she attempts to conquer all.

As Mr. Dulles presented the prospect after his swing around the Pacific, the terms of peace are to be drawn up gradually. There will be no Far-East Versailles. Instead, terms agreed to by preliminary discussions will be presented for all to sign.

Parleys on the subject thus far reveal agreement on the general idea that Japan should be enabled to provide for her own defense. At the same time there is widespread fear in other Asiatic countries that this might lead to a new surge of Japanese militarism. Some restrictions must prevent that. One of the checks to which Japan now agrees is the maintenance of American armed forces and American bases in and near the main Japanese islands. But the main purpose of these installations is to defend Japan for the time being.

Perhaps the most dramatic of the ideas now developing is that the peace terms would restore to Japan the widest possible self-rule. Japan will be free to reverse the reforms effected by the American occupation. She may rebuild the industrial and financial monopolies of the pre-war period, abrogate the land distribution program and even bring back certain aggressive industrial and military leaders. The hope is, however, that given her head, Japan will develop in a democratic direction.

Whether this is a good risk or not will depend in large part on the degree of national prosperity Japan is able to sustain in the post-war world.

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Here is a nation of 84,000,000 people with inadequate natural resources. In this sense the problem is akin to Britain's. Access to raw materials is of paramount urgency. It is understandable if disturbing to find little promise of wholehearted co-operation in this regard on the part of Japan's neighbors.

The American plan is to bank on a new national economy exchanging finished products for raw materials and thus obviate the necessity of direct American subsidies of any size. The American Chamber of Commerce, however, seems more realistic in plugging for continuing American aid. While the Philippines, still recovering from the harshness of a three-year Japanese occupation, present an added burden by insisting on reparations of at least four billion dollars, the sum required to redeem their supply of "Mickey Mouse" occupation money.

Since Pearl Harbor, the population of Japan has increased by ten million. Meanwhile she has lost Formosa and Korea, lower Sakhalin and the Kuriles (to Russia) and the Ryukus and other islands (to American occupying forces). She has lost her hegemony on the Far East and alienated many neighbors with whom she once traded heavily. Communist China is not at present a likely customer. Withal, her economy suffered drastically in the war and the ensuing defeat.

In other words, Japan's economic prospects appear to be considerably worse than they were before the war — when she was in desperate straits. The Japanese people must have considerably more to go on if they are to serve as a bulwark in their own and in our defense. A number of them must be given the opportunity to emigrate. Japanese shipping must again have a free hand. American negotiators should exert their influence to set up solid trade relations in the Pacific. And whatever reparations are decided upon, they must not take a form that would cripple Japanese revival.

The object in this matter is to avoid a "power vacuum" into which the Russians would expand. But it will be impossible to avoid such a vacuum unless the Japanese people at long last get a real chance of making a living.

Second Thoughts

WHEN two of Italy's more militant young Communist Deputies, Valdo Magnani and Aldo Cucchi, told their fellow comrades the other day that "Communists must unconditionally . . . declare themselves against any aggressor," they made the fatal mistake of associating the term "aggressor" with the Soviet Union, and in so doing they became the newest members of that lonely, if growing, company of European Communists (Tito of Yugoslavia, Gomulka of Poland, Kostov of Bulgaria, Clementis of Czechoslovakia) who still like to call their country their own. Although it is true that, in the words of a wry slogan now going the rounds in Italy, "Magnani and Cucchi chose Italy," that is probably about as far as the reform in their thinking goes. As in the case of Tito and the other "national Communists," it is quite likely that they will go right on about their Marxist business and, like Tito, they will no doubt be accorded a chill reception in Western circles.

It is hard to see how the reception can be otherwise, there being, as things stand now, no ground for an ultimate compromise between Marxist atheism and a non-Marxist way of life. Because Stalinist Marxism has behind it the largest army in the world, the present conflict between Marxism and the West frequently and rightly enough takes a physical form in our minds and for this reason we can easily lose sight of the fact that though in a war we might pursue the foremost living exponent of Marxism to his destruction in an air-raid bunker in Moscow, we could not destroy his Marxist ideas quite so decisively. It is, of course, because the Stalinists constitute the clear and present danger at the moment that Tito and the national Communists are of tremendous importance to us, since they represent the early and unmistakable signs of the ideological breakdown of Stalinist Marxism. They are doing for us what none of our bombs could do.

But ultimately we have to go beyond this; we have to bring about a modification, somehow or other, in the ideology of Marxism itself before we can negotiate a final peace, and this will almost certainly be a long and patient process if it is done, as it should be, without provoking the catastrophe of world war. Whether or not conflict between Marxists and non-Marxists is inevitable, it is indeed inevitable that, given time and a little shrewdness on our part, the number of dissidents and deviationists from Marxism is bound to increase and multiply, and as that happens, our chances of seeing modifications in the Marxist ideology will increase and multiply at the same time.

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Pastor Niemoeller and His Flock

The anti-Nazi hero has become the voice of German neutrality; his old congregation disagrees.

By NORBERT MUHLEN

A SHORT while ago, in a quiet parish house on a quiet winter evening, a Lutheran churchman talked about questions of the time with his former congregation whom he had come to visit. What made this meeting so unusual were its participants, its setting and the turn which it took.

It happened in Dahlem, a well-to-do suburb of West Berlin. The villas of the suburb, which tries hard to look like a village, were built shortly before and after the second World War by professional and upper-middle-class Berliners. Rather few of these houses were destroyed by bombs, and their ruins are hidden from the casual eye by cast-iron fences and pleasant gardens and one does not see the lack of roofs and windows behind the healthy ivy vines. Walking through Dahlem's linden-lined streets you may think you are back in the bourgeois solidness of pre-war Germany.

But then you notice many new American cars racing through these Dahlem streets, and you pass plenty of GIs and brass of the U. S. Army. Rather than being in Germany you seem to be in America superimposed on Germany. A walking distance of only a few minutes away, there is a tremendous stockade, which a short while ago had been a Nazi air force center, but serves now as headquarters of civilian and military occupation authorities. On Saturdays, when the blue-jeaned wives of the Occupation officials drive up to buy the week's provisions, and their cowboy-dressed offspring purchase batches of the latest comics, you may be reminded of a typical Saturday in Middletown, U.S.A.

As a matter of fact, though, you are as far away from the seeming solidness of the German past as from the seeming normality of the American present; for you are only a few miles removed from the border of the Soviet empire surrounding you. You are on a tiny free island where Germans and Americans hold out against the encircling Soviets.

NORBERT MUHLEN, who is the American correspondent of the Berlin monthly, Der Monat, has recently returned to this country from Berlin.

The many young people hurrying along the Dahlem streets are refugees from this Soviet empire who have become students at Berlin's new Free University, established in and near Dahlem when, two years ago, the old Berlin University became a tool of the East-German Communist dictatorship. Many of its teachers and students crossed over to the West in search of freedom; now, new refugees from the East-German universities are arriving almost every day with the hope of enrolling at this, the only free school behind the Iron Curtain.

With its deceptive facade of a happily restored old Germany, and its American soldiers badly outnumbered by the Soviet soldiers around the corner, and its youthful refugee population which is certainly one of Europe's most freedom-pledged groups, the little Dahlem suburb presents in a show-case, as it were, the conflicting forces which keep Europe awake these nights.

★

ON NOVEMBER 16th, 1950, the Rev. D. Martin Niemoeller addressed the Lutheran congregation of Dahlem, the biggest congregation of the suburb, in its *Gemeindehaus*, the parish house. He had been the minister of this congregation before and during the last war, and he had made it famous while he himself became famous.

When Dr. Niemoeller was appointed Dahlem's Lutheran minister twenty years ago, he was an unknown young man. Born in 1892, he had served as an officer in the Imperial Navy and in the first World War he had fought as a U-boat commander. As he later protested in his autobiography, he "didn't feel quite comfortable" when he had to frustrate the rescue of the drowning crew of a French troop transport that he had torpedoed.

With the first World War lost and the German fleet scuttled, he enrolled at the university to become a Lutheran pastor, as his father had been; he interrupted his studies to lead a secret group of armed volunteers when some Rightist ex-officers attempted a *putsch* against the democratic republic. In 1924, Dr. Niemoeller was ordained and worked for several years as secretary of the Protestant "Inner Mission" in Westphalia; in 1930 his first—and so far his only—

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congregation was entrusted to him in Dahlem.

When Hitler came to power in 1933, Dr. Niemoeller rejoiced. Later it became clear that Hitler did not intend to exempt the Protestant churches from his totalitarian rule, and Niemoeller objected to this. Together with a number of clerics and laymen, he founded in Dahlem the "Brethren's Councils" of his Church, for which he proclaimed a state of emergency. This led to the organization of the "Professing Christians," whom he led in opposition to Hitler's party-run "German Christians." Hitler suspended Niemoeller from office, but he continued preaching in his Dahlem church, which became the all-German symbol of Protestant opposition to the Third Reich. His sermon—on the text, "We must obey the Lord rather than men"—in June, 1937, was his last; four days later he was arrested. After a court sentenced him to only a nominal punishment, the Gestapo sent him without trial to a concentration camp.

A member of the upper class in the "concentrational universe," as the Frenchman David Rousset has called the highly stratified social structure of concentration camps, Niemoeller did not have to go through the ordeals of those who were tortured and murdered; since the secret police just wanted the non-conformist churchman out of the public limelight, and since he had many friends in high places, he was permitted by the camp commander to do scientific work, to be visited regularly by his wife and friends, and he was even allowed his daily quart of wine. When American troops liberated him, he declared immediately that he resisted Hitler only on ecclesiastical, not on political, grounds. But he was world-famous now as a religious dissenter to Nazism.

In the post-war period Dr. Niemoeller has held high positions in the Lutheran Church. As Vice-President in charge of foreign relations of the German Lutheran Church, he travelled abroad widely, and in 1947 he became the President of the Lutheran Church of Hesse-Nassau, rejecting for himself the title of Bishop which, he declared, "had become a stink in the Third Reich." When he visited his old Dahlem parishioners in November, 1950, he told them what he had told other Germans and what had already stirred up much excitement, since he is one of the best-known German Lutheran church leaders at home and by far the best-known abroad.

★

NIEMOELLER is deeply antagonistic to the West German Republic: "With the establishment of the West German Federation, which was begotten in Rome and born in Washington, Germany has lost her previous position as the strongest Protestant power on the European continent, for today the Federation is a Catholic state."

Obsessed by this idea, he blames West Germany—and the Western powers—rather than Moscow for the worries of the world: "I am convinced that Myron Taylor as special envoy of Roosevelt and later of Truman in Rome was a factor in the division of Germany and the threat to peace which is caused by it."

This *ideé fixe* prepares his softness toward Soviet Russia; "If there is the alternative between the continuing division of Germany, or the unification of Germany under a dictatorship, even that of Russia, the Germans should prefer the risk of Communism."

He doesn't think the "risk" of Communism to be a very bad risk. "It is an infamous heresy to claim that it would be ruinous for the Church to wake up some day in a Communist world." And he promised a reward of 1 million marks ($240,000) to "anybody who can prove that the preparation of resistance against Bolshevism is founded on the Holy Scriptures." Later he amplified this statement by saying that he only meant that "the Church has to serve the Communists like all other human beings."

He is firmly set against any West-German participation in the Atlantic defense against the Soviets. From the concentration camp in 1939 he had volunteered his services as a U-boat commander against the Allies, which indicates that he is not a radical pacifist; his present radical anti-war position is caused, as he has often said, by his fear that "Germans would kill Germans." Not that men would kill men. He doubts whether Western democracy is worth defending, whether it is better than Soviet rule.

★

THIS MAN who has often used the salty, slangy language of the U-boat hero when telling his people that any Western German bearing arms for the West is "just a fool," is popular in West Germany. Confused as his thought may be, his appeals to action—or, rather, against action—are on a decisive note. Without sharing his nationalist, narrow motives, many West Germans adopt his conclusion that resistance to Communism is not worthwhile. They are so fear-ridden that they hope for German "neutrality." Their country, ruined by the last war and, some appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, still suffering from it, would probably fare even worse in the next war. If the Communists come, it would mean the death sentence for those who had advocated resistance; now, however, they risk nothing by pleading for neutrality under the Western government.

They want to survive; they love their life more then freedom. And in Niemoeller they have

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found a spokesman who, as a personally brave man, cannot be accused of the cowardice of which they themselves feel guilty. They therefore cheer him when he speaks up (for reasons of his own) in favor of that almost pathetically fallacious fantasy, "German neutrality between East and West." Niemoeller is today the fearless spokesman for West Germany's frightened people.

Allying himself with political movements and men, some of whom are close to the Soviets, and publicly attacking West-German Premier Konrad Adenauer, his goverment, his party and his state in a sometimes vitriolic language, Niemoeller has become a favorite of the East-German Communist dictatorship. Niemoeller's recent open letter to Dr. Adenauer against Western defense was distributed by the Communists of Germany by the millions; an introductory note compared "the progressive Church leader, Niemoeller" with the "war-mongering bishops" and the "atom-bomb bishops." The Communist city government of Altenburg in Thuringia, East Germany, voted in favor of naming a street after Niemoeller.

In November the Conference of the Twelve Lutheran Churches of Germany met in West Berlin to decide whether Niemoeller's political activities and proclamations still made it possible for him to run the foreign relations office of the Lutheran Church. The spokesmen of the Lutheran Churches in Soviet-controlled East Germany declared that his resignation from office would be "absolutely intolerable;" some of the West-German spokesmen supported this view, although a few of them, foremost among them Berlin's own Bishop Dr. Otto Dibelius, bravely resist the Soviets. The majority of the Lutheran pastors in the Soviet zone compromise little with, and often courageously oppose, their Soviet rulers. After secret debates, the Council "regretted the sharp tone in some of Niemoeller's utterances," admonished all churchmen to keep away from politics as much as possible, and confirmed Niemoeller again in his high office.

On that very night, Niemoeller's old parishioners, at their meeting in the Dahlem *Gemeindehaus,* passionately objected to the views he presented; when he held that the Western powers rather than the Soviets were responsible for the fate of the East Germans, they rose in protest.

★

FOR THESE parishioners of Dahlem—like most other West Berliners, whatever their religious, political or economic status—have lived through the Communist reality, and they have resisted Communism for four crowded years of misery and valor. They cannot forget the weeks of Soviet occupation, with the unspeakable horror which ended only when Western troops took over. They have compared the Western and the Eastern systems ruling side by side in their divided city, and they think that life is worth living under Western, relative freedom rather than under Eastern, totalitarian slavery. Their life is a continual demonstration of Eastern and Western differences. Churches are dynamited in East Berlin "for the good of the city's reconstruction;" an unemployed West Berliner can eat more and live better than his hard-working East-Berlin colleague; they can read, say, advocate what they think right—which is a capital crime in the Eastern part of their city. And Dr. Niemoeller can preach his anti-government, anti-Western ideas as freely as they can object. They feel protected by the Americans, not oppressed, and they want to resist, together with the Americans, the enemy who surrounds them.

Closer to the cause of the world's fear than anybody else, the Berliners fear it less. For four years, the Soviets have tried everything to break the Berliners' resistance, from the planned starvation which the airlift frustrated and the planned invasion last Whitsuntide which the Berliners and Americans jointly resisted, to a never-ending war of nerves, in which the Soviets alternately cut off the beleaguered city's food supplies, fuel, then the light, then the milk, the medicine supplies, and so on. Hungry, freezing and dark, the city has withstood it all. Whether or not the Red army will attempt the assault, the Berliners do not know. Every one of them who speaks up against the Soviets can, according to the new "Law for the Protection of Peace," be sentenced to death if and when the Soviets get hold of him. Even today, he is not safe in the Western sector since Stalin's hand often reaches over the border to abduct free Berliners; to name only one profession, twenty-four writers have been kidnapped by Soviet agents in the last few years from their West-Berlin sanctuary and they have disappeared into the Soviet camp. In the midst of danger, the Berliners have resisted and they still resist. They love liberty more than their life. So far, their faith in a righteous cause and their decision to defend it have been rewarded by victory, for despite all his threats, Stalin has retreated before the Berlin resistance.

This was what the Dahlem people told their former minister, and this is the Berlin reply to the West-German opinion as presented by Dr. Niemoeller. Those who have gone through the worst and face the danger most closely have rejected those West Germans who have advised them to seek a deceptive safety in the betrayal of freedom. Whether, at the end of the dialogue which goes on all over Western Europe, Niemoeller or his nameless Dahlem flock will finally convince and carry the majority, may well decide the outcome of this whole struggle.

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Catholic Journalism

The responsibility of speaking the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

By GERALD VANN

EVELYN WAUGH *once wrote that the* function of the novelist is to set man against the background of eternal values. In the same way, from the Catholic point of view, the work of the historian is to analyze and judge historical events against the same background; and the Catholic journalist in his turn, dealing as by definition he does with the day-to-day events of his world, must equally try to assess them, and to state them, from the same point of view. Man's story unfolds through the days and through the centuries; effects follow inescapably from causes good or evil, events lead up to the Cross, events flow out from the Cross; the events of today shape the destinies, mortal and immortal, of tomorrow. Hence the tremendous responsibility of anyone whose job it is to share in the shaping of public opinion—an opinion which may in the end determine affairs of world-wide importance.

Two things are immediately obvious. If you are thus to judge events from an eternal point of view, from God's point of view, you must first of all be dedicated to truth, since God is truth. You will have to be factual, not tendentious: you will have to state the truth, whole, as you see it, neither arranging it to fit a preconceived theory nor coloring it to match a prejudice. (A Catholic historian who whitewashes the evil deeds of Catholics sins against truth.) Secondly, you will have views about the relative importance of different events which stand out in marked contrast to those of your non-Christian contemporaries. At the lowest level the news-hawk is interested only in events which have news-value, by which he means the commercial value of the sensational, which again at the lowest level tends to mean the sexual and the morbid. For him, a good flamboyant sex-murder is far more important than the activities of UN or the definition of the Assumption; and even so, he will arrange his facts to meet the customer's needs.

GERALD VANN, O.P., is the headmaster of Blackfriars School in Northamtonshire, England, and the author of The Heart of Man, The Divine Pity, and Morals Maketh Man.

The Communist will have another, but equally definite, scale of values; and again he will trim his facts to fit the party line. But even the most honorable journalist, writing in the serious papers and reviews, and doing his best to face all the facts available, will tend to view them in the light not of eternal but of temporal values—political expediency, economic efficiency, the happiness of man here and now. And again his preconceptions, though he will not allow them to tamper with the facts, will color his judgment of the facts. On both these counts, then, truth and the scale of values, the Catholic writer will find himself in a minority; he will also be likely to find himself in practical difficulties.

★

LET US LOOK further into this question of the scale of values. If your concern is with eternal truth, your greatest interest must be in the deepening awareness and understanding of that truth—in other words, in the development of the living mind of the Church as such; for it is here that you find the principles by which everything else is to be judged. Next in importance come influences—events, actions, theories, psychological trends—of sufficient importance to affect the world as a whole, or the whole status of the Church in the world.

Thereafter come more localized affairs which however are likely to affect the spiritual or psychological development of man in the region concerned. Then you have the events which affect man's material conditions of living, first in the world as a whole and then in the nation. And only then come the particular incidents—the murders and scandals, the sports items, the odd goings-on (or, in the Catholic world, the small ecclesiastical events, the ceremonies, the openings of churches, the jubilees of priests and nuns, the clubs and bazaars) with which the ordinary journalist is ordinarily concerned.

Perhaps it is in some ways a pity that the words of the Song of Songs, *hortus conclusus*, a garden enclosed, were ever applied to the Church. Enclosure implies keeping things out; it can also imply a morbid provincialism, an exclusive concern with what goes on within. Certainly we are sometimes guilty of an appalling maladjustment in our scale of values, as when

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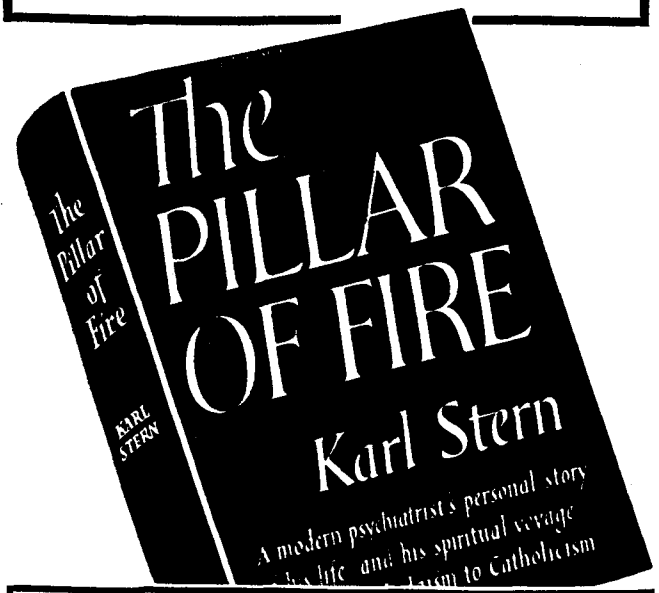

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an event of parochial interest is given pride of place, because it is Catholic, over things which are going to affect the future of the world.

Perhaps this is due in part to a failure to distinguish carefully enough between the different *kinds* of Catholic periodical. You have the learned theological or philosophical quarterlies, the rather more popular monthlies, the nation-wide weeklies, and then the provincial papers down to the parish magazine. These should all form an organic whole, with diversity of function.

At the top the theological studies at the speculative level: creative or expository of doctrinal development, analytical of Church definitions, etc; next (in the monthlies) the quasi-speculative study of the application of this thought to current world problems, and the analysis of the world problems in the light of them; then, in the weeklies, the practical and popular treatment of the same themes as a background to the factual reporting of national and international events, and here the items of purely Catholic interest should be confined to those which have a really wide importance; lastly, the small regional papers, such as the parish magazine, which could play an important part in the Church's life if they combined the double function of reporting Catholic news of domestic interest and at the same time embodying the work of the reviews and weeklies in yet simpler form: simple doctrinal sermons or meditations on current theological themes.

But, at the same time, just as the parish magazine should be domestic, playing an important part in the formation of a *family* spirit in the parish, but a *Christian* family spirit, outward-turning, interested in and anxious to help with the problems and the events of the town or district of which it forms a part, so the weekly paper too must share the same spirit on a larger scale. Patriotism, i.e., love of one's *patria,* is part of the Christian virtue of piety; so the monthlies and quarterlies must study, and study with sympathy and with understanding of the prevailing climate of opinion, trends of thought outside the Church, must bring not only learning but the eirenic spirit to such questions as the reunion of Christendom, and not only theology but a contemporary mind, a sense of actuality, a real understanding of current art and literature, to their appraisal of the thought and the creative activity of the times. For this too is part of the dedication to truth.

★

IT IS not enough to have the truth oneself, in the sense of knowing the Church's teaching about the Trinity, the Incarnation, and so on; truth is a question also of *mode,* of the mode of approach to other facts, other beliefs, other

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problems; it implies clarity but it also implies sympathy; it implies critical judgment but it also implies charity, for God who is truth is also love. But more than that, it is a question of mode in another sense. The French speak of the *vulgarization* of theology: and the word means popularizing, it does not mean vulgarizing. Good writing is part of truth. If you take a true proposition and state it in a sentimental way, in a sectarian way, in a vulgar way, you damage the truth of it. You damage the truth itself because you distort it; you also sin against the truth inasmuch as you tend to distort or degrade the minds of your readers.

Here again then, the Catholic journalist has a heavy responsibility. The unhappy fact is that nowadays vast masses of people have learned how to read but have forgotten how to think. So they adopt, consciously, the opinions they read in the papers; but at the same time their minds are colored, unconsciously, by the tone, the style, of what they read in the papers. Bad writing gradually degrades the uncritical reader; good writing may gradually educate him—gradually and unconsciously.

We Catholics have long suffered from debased art-forms, in our statues, our paintings, and so on: if you continue to purvey that sort of stuff, on the grounds that you are "giving the public what it wants," you sin against truth. But just as years of "modern" advertising have made the principles of cubism familiar and acceptable to everybody, though at its birth it was such caviar to the general, so in the same sort of way, patient years of work can induce a new apprehension among Catholic readers of what is and what is not a "holy picture."

★

AND this leads us to one last, and important, point. The Church educates our conscious minds in many obvious ways; it also educates our unconscious minds, through its constant daily use of symbol. And this latter work, even from a purely natural and humanist point of view, is of quite inestimable value. The soil of the world is dried up, the soul of man is bored and neurotic and rootless, largely because it has become cut off from its symbol-life. That sense of oneness with the universe which the primitive knows through his myths and rites, which the peasant knows through his knowledge and love of the earth and the rhythm of the seasons, and which the poets can teach to those who will read them —all this is lost to a society which has become too cerebral. The Church teaches not just the rationalizing part of the psyche, but the whole psyche, the whole man, to live. Too much contemporary journalism, on the other hand, appeals precisely to a part only of the personality:

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at best to the reason, at worst to the fallen senses or emotions, in isolation from the spirit.

Now it is not of course the job of the journalist as such to be a poet; but he can play his part in the re-integration of the human personality: he can help to point out the evil, and the remedies; he can help his readers to understand and live the Church's symbolism and the symbolism of humanity in general, and in general to bring to their reading of contemporary events a broad and deep understanding.

To set events against a background of eternal values: it means first of all to see humanity whole. If you report a murder in the manner of the gutter-press you de-personalize the people concerned in it; they become, not human beings, but things, means to sensation. The Catholic writer must treat human beings as ends, not means; he must show them in the round; and then he must see and treat their lives, their thoughts and actions, as having immortal significance. So he will be helping to restore to our shallow world the sense of depth; and in doing that he will be doing work which is itself of eternal value.

The Stage

THE ROSE TATTOO

TENNESSEE Williams, to come right out with it, seems to me not only the finest playwright now working in the American theatre but in one very strict sense the *only* playwright now working in the American theatre. Alone among his contemporaries he works as an artist and a poet: he makes plays out of images, catching a turn of life while it is still fluid, still immediate, and before it has been sterilized by reflection. Arthur Miller, for instance, builds a better play, but he builds it out of bricks; Williams is all flesh and blood. He writes with his eyes and his ears where other men are content to pick their brains—poetry with them is an overlay of thought, not a direct experience—and his plays emerge in the theatre full-bodied, undissected, so kinetic you can touch them.

He is not without his vices. The worst of them is his inability to conclude anything. For some reason or other, he seems unable to fashion an ending for a narrative out of the materials with which he has begun it. "The Glass Menagerie" simply stops. "A Streetcar Named Desire" escapes into the heroine's insanity, which is to wash out the struggle rather than resolve it. "The Rose Tattoo" winds up by junking a character complexity which has

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fascinated us all evening in favor of a simple sexual gesture, a gesture which is totally inadequate to the needs of the play.

"The Rose Tattoo" has two wonderfully exhilarating acts. The first is concerned with the emotional paralysis which overtakes a volatile Sicilian woman living in the Gulf country near Mobile, when the husband in whom she takes fierce pride is killed. The second is concerned with her reluctant reawakening at the hands of a man who, compared to her own idea of her first husband, is little more than a clown. While these events are taking place the theatre swims in vitality and rich good humor.

In the third act, as Williams casts about for a resolution, both the action and the characterization begin to thin out. The heroine, breathtakingly played by Maureen Stapleton, has been presented to us as a quicksilver compound of physical passion, intense idealism, and hysterical religiosity. That a single sexual act should reduce these qualities to a happy harmony is implausible; it tends to suggest that there was no real conflict in the first place. At this point we begin to feel that we know the woman better than Williams does—sexual gratification would hold her down for about an hour—and the bland surrender with which Williams waves away her personal torment destroys, rather than absorbs, the complexity which has made her interesting. It also brings into focus a certain sentimentality about sex which runs through Williams' work, a kind of humorless dedication which leads his characters into locutions like 'getting them colored lights going' and earnest apostrophes to 'the glory' of it. Where Williams is earthily realistic about everything else, he is somewhat romantic about sex, and his wide-eyed wonder at it all goads him to occasional disproportions bordering on parody—as in a third-act scene during which an intense ingenue tries to break down an equally agonized but rigidly responsible young man. There is some assumption behind the plays that the psychological aberrations of the universe can be quickly settled on one big bed; it is one of the few failures of honest observation in Williams' work.

He has in the past been much criticized for his preoccupation with neurotics and for his tendency to deal only with the violent back-alleys of life. The former criticism he answers with "The Rose Tattoo"—there isn't a neurotic in it. The latter seems to me to require no justification. We live in an age of soft passions—passions for comfort rather than for intense experience—and the playwright looking for intense experience to dramatize must go to the fringes of society, where the comforts have broken down and other emotions have taken over. Mr. Williams has consistently done this, and we have been rewarded with a dramatic vigor beside which most other contemporary drama pales.

Cheryl Crawford's production of "The Rose Tatoo" is first-rate. She has uncovered an astonishingly varied and mature talent in Maureen Stapleton, and an exceptionally able foil for Miss Stapleton in Eli Wallach.

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Daniel Mann's direction has created exciting performances throughout. Mr. Mann would seem to be an actor's rather than a playwright's director—his physical movement is not always all it should be, and he has let Williams repeat himself here and there—but what he gets out of the actors more than makes up for an occasional visual awkwardness. (*At the Martin Beck*).

THE GREEN BAY TREE

FOR THE SECOND time this season Shepard Traube has selected a very workable play for revival and then proceeded to do what he could to keep it from working. As with "The Gioconda Smile," he has insisted on directing "The Green Bay Tree" himself, and the result is a clumsy and unpolished production of a play which, properly done, might have held its own very nicely. Mordaunt Shairp's play has not perceptibly dated over the years; even in a production which fumbles its most necessary qualities it has a steady interest and considerable cumulative excitement.

The play deals with a sybarite who adopts a boy and so succeeds in moulding him to his own image that the boy is later unable to break with the life of effete luxury for which he has been prepared. The present production mercifully ignores the aura of homosexuality which has sometimes been permitted to surround the play; unfortunately, it also ignores the luxury. The setting is nowhere near rich enough to convey the lush and ritualistic estheticism of its inhabitants; the deportment of the actors lacks savor and repose; the values which make a life of tasteful hedonism both attractive and destructive escape Mr. Traube altogether. His stage business is permitted to betray the characters in hopelessly obvious ways: the butler, played by that excellent actor Francis Compton, is made to snatch glassware from a table in a manner which would be found repugnant at the Greasy Spoon; and both the elder and the younger esthetes are given to draping their feet all over the sofa. Hell, we don't even do that around *our* house. More seriously, Traube has conveyed nothing of the exquisite formality, the calculated control of these lives. Joseph Schildkraut, who might very well have been an excellent choice for the role, is directed into petulance rather than poise. The part calls for an overripe knowledgeability, a secure suavity. Schildkraut plays it in an outraged whine. At that, he is a good enough actor to build to a firm climax on his own terms; but they are not the terms of the play, and the production's over-all lack of convincing style makes the younger boy more an ass than an enervated esthete. Denholm Elliott, as the boy, and Anne Crawford, as the girl who fails to reclaim him, are obviously competent performers, too, but they must fight the production all the way. (*At the Golden*).

WALTER KERR.

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The Screen

WHAT ARE FOREIGN FILMS SAYING?

FROM THE newest batch of imported movies my preference is for *"Angelo,"* an Italian picture, with subtitles by Herman Weinberg. As a production "Angelo" frequently leaves much to be desired: it is awkwardly lighted and edited, and at times Director-writer Francesco de Robertis' cast, several of whom are non-professionals, do not come through too well. But in spite of its flaws this film is powerfully moving and compassionate in its depiction of human relations. Perhaps the production's lack of finish even adds to the realism and touching qualities in this story of a man who is released from prison after serving four years for stealing bread. During that time his wife died in childbirth. The man hurries home to see his son for the first time. His friends are embarrassed at his arrival; and at the orphanage where the boy has been cared for, the nun in charge delays the impatient man by asking many questions concerning the home he would make for the child. The youngster is brought in. The man is horrified, and runs away in disgust. The boy is a mulatto with blond hair.

At first, because the little fellow is so appealing, it is hard for us to understand the man's extreme distaste; then we come to realize his position: he is a cuckold; his wife was unfaithful with an American Negro GI; he is stuck with little Angelo because he is legally the boy's father. His hatred of the boy is really aimed at the dead wife; and this hatred allows the man and the friend with whom he lives to exploit the boy. Angelo accompanies the two men, who are entertainers in a cafe, and collects the coins which diners enjoy giving to the youngster. How the man (effectively played by newcomer Renato Baldini) finally overcomes his revulsion for the boy, learns to love him and then faces the shock of losing him when his uncle, an American Negro, comes to adopt him, makes up the material for the rest of this engrossing film. Most of these themes are well handled, and it is to de Robertis' credit that he avoided getting too sentimental with a child as captivating as little Angelo. It is also to his credit that his film does more for interracial unity than many of the Hollywood attempts along the same line.

★

THE FRENCH have sent over an item about children too. It is called *"Face to the Wind,"* and tells a story about the summer vacation activities of a group of Paris youngsters in the Montmartre district. Feeling sorry for themselves and being stronger in imagination than in honesty, these moppets build up quite a racket by stealing dogs and then returning them later

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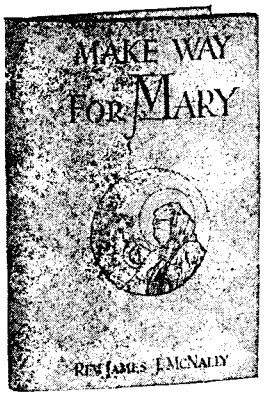

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for reward. The first part of this picture has some delightful cinematic imagery and the antics of the kids are amusing; but as the plot stretches out beyond credulity and the "dognappers" shower their ill-gotten gains on various oldsters who think the pennies from heaven are a miracle, the episodes begin to pall. The characterizations of the street urchins stem from the French cartoonist, Poulbot; you may find, as I did, that the French ideas of children in action are no great improvement over the themes used in Hollywood's "Our Gang" comedies.

★

BUT when it comes to sex in movies, the so-called Gallic touch is in a class all by itself. Starting out as a turn-of-the-century melodrama, *"Miquette"* becomes a satire on the whole school of plays about an innocent country girl with a yen to go on the stage, a roué who pays for her career and has very obvious designs, the ham actor who heads the company with which she performs, the boyfriend who is a country bumpkin, and the girl's mother who is at first very shocked by all the goings-on but is finally happy to accept attentions from the wealthy roué. Henri-Georges Clouzot directed this period piece with emphasis on corn and forced humor. The cast, led by lovely Daniele Delorme, Louis Jouvet and Saturnin Fabre, frequently talk right into the camera and to you, as in the manner of the old-fashioned asides. Unfortunately if you don't understand French, you will miss much of the point of the argument, for there are not enough subtitles and the film is done in a talky, theatrical manner without a great deal of action. What action there is in the acting is exaggerated in the style of old silent-film technique, and before "Miquette" is half finished you have grown tired of its scheme. The acting in this stylized convention is no doubt good, but neither the story nor the "naughty" situations are worthy of the good cast.

★

PERHAPS in "Miquette" Director Clouzot was kidding one of his own films: *"Manon,"* which is now being shown in this country. This is a modernized version of the Abbé Prévost novel, in which the heroine is a collaborator and the hero a member of the French Underground. They fall madly in love, get involved in the black market after the war and are caught in a swirl of passion and shady deals. As the young people in the lead roles, Cecile Aubry and Michel Auclair are attractive enough, but the roles they play are so sordid that you finally begin to wonder who is kidding whom. I'm sure Director Clouzot's intentions were to shock his audience, but it must have dawned on him when he carried each sexy scene to the nth degree that audiences could hardly take him seriously. Try as you will you just can't squeeze out a tear for this unhappy couple at the finale.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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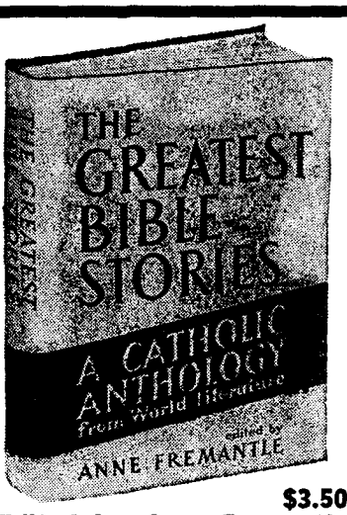
Books

The New Soviet Empire. David J. Dallin. Yale. $3.75.

RUSSIA," remarked one of her statesmen during the last century, "is a despotism tempered by assassination," and, he should have added, by corruption. In recent times the efficiency of the despotism has increased. It has been seventeen years since the last high Russian official fell victim to an assassin, and now corruption remains the only effective limitation on the authority of the Soviet regime. Such is the theme of the latest book by David J. Dallin, a writer well-known for his powerful indictments of the rulers and policies of the Soviet Union. Mr. Dallin's scholarship is not always above reproach, and he generally fails to do justice to the positive aspects of Communism, but it can hardly be denied that on balance he has more accurately explained and predicted the mysterious doings of the Politburo than have his critics and opponents.

Modern imperialism, he points out in *The New Soviet Empire,* cannot be as open in its methods as its nineteenth-century predecessor could. Stalin must leave his satellites their juridical independence and content himself with dictating their foreign policies and draining off much of their production through the ingenious device of "mixed (Russo-satellite) companies." In the past, either a Western European alliance or a Central European combination led by Germany has sufficed to check Russian military power when the need arose. Now, however, it can be contained, if at all, only by a coalition which includes Western Europe, Germany, and the United States. Fortunately, the Atlantic Pact includes all three of these elements, but its armed forces are still in an embryonic state.

Some Americans and Europeans have claimed to discern something aggressive, brutal, subhuman in the Russian national character, and some



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self-proclaimed scholars have arrived at the same conclusion in their anthropological and sociological "studies." The real key to the Russian riddle, however, Mr. Dallin finds not so much in the character of the Russian people as in the policies of their leaders. The latter believe that eventual war with the capitalist world, led by the United States, is inevitable. Their own position, however, is weakened by the existence within the Soviet Union of diverse races which resent the Great Russian yoke that is being fastened ever tighter on their necks.

The vaunted social revolution within Russia Mr. Dallin denounces as a sham; the Bolsheviks have merely substituted a new ruling class for the old. The new elite enjoys a much higher standard of living than does the ordinary citizen, and its leaders are guarded with care which reveals how uncertain the loyalty of their subjects actually is. The Communist Party has swollen to an enormous size (nearly seven million members), and its control presents serious problems. If an internal upheaval ever occurs, Mr. Dallin believes, "it will start with a bitter fight within the alleged 'monolith,' the Communist party of the Soviet Union."

This book shares one defect with its predecessors; Mr. Dallin seldom tells us what his authority for even his most important statements is, and this time he has not troubled to include a bibliography. Still, I know of no reason to question his statements of fact, and although I believe that the regime may enjoy somewhat more support among its citizens than Mr. Dallin will admit, I consider his book one of the best studies of the Soviet Union to be published in recent years.

HAROLD C. HINTON.

A Solovyov Anthology. Edited by S. L. Frank. Scribner's. $3.50.

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years of fruitful writing and teaching in the field of Russian religious philosophy. He was the very man to make a careful and well-balanced choice of Solovyovian texts. As Dr. Frank reminds us in his scholarly introduction, this was no easy choice because of the extraordinary range of Solovyov's gifts. Solovyov was "a philosopher, a theologian, a perfectly original mystic, a man of the 'prophetic' type, a moral teacher, a political thinker, a poet and a literary critic."

Solovyov's idea of Godmanhood, continually unfolding in a universe to be finally transfigured, was the fountainhead of all his teaching. God Incarnate meant to him essentially the Mystical Body, that is *Unity*. This is why, on the moral and social levels, he wrote on behalf of love and brotherhood, and on the religious level he was the apostle of reunion. He was, as Dr. Frank points out, a "prophetic" type of man, the prophet of universality. He had a cosmic approach to man, to history, to the events of his own time. Whether he wrote on the Christian State or on the "great dispute between East and West" (the title of one of his books), whether he defended the dignity of the Jews or attacked the excesses of Russian nationalism, we always penetrate with Solovyov below or above the surface of things, so as to reach a mystical core, or a spiritual stratosphere.

He was deeply conscious of the apocalyptic meaning of things—strikingly exemplified in *The Story of Antichrist,* which Dr. Frank includes in his anthology. Other excerpts are taken from Solovyov's *Lectures on Godmanhood,* from *The Meaning of Love,* from *The History and the Future of Theocracy* and from *The National Question in Russia.* These excerpts are beautifully translated from the Russian by Natalie Duddnington, long a pioneer in the field of Russian literary and religious studies.

In an appendix, Professor Frank raises the question: "Was Solovyov a convert to Roman Catholicism?" Himself a Russian Orthodox, Dr. Frank admits that Solovyov did make a Catholic profession of faith. But he is not satisfied with this fact, since on his deathbed Solovyov received Communion from a Russian Orthodox priest. The Catholics argue that this was done *in extremis,* when no Catholic priest was near. The Russian Orthodox interpret these last moments of Solovyov's life as a return to his early faith. Professor Frank sees in these last moments something more typically "Solovyovian"—the manifestation of his consciousness of a Church Universal, of a mystically united East and West, to both of which he belonged. The only, rather simple-minded priest at hand at the time was certainly unprepared to deal with such a complex soul. In fact, Solovyov was desperately seeking to solve through his death the dilemma which had haunted him all his life: this was nothing less than the Christian East's entire religious problem. HELENE ISWOLSKY.

Robert Burns. David Daiches. Rinehart. $3.50.

YES, of course he was a very wonderful poet, but did he *have* to write in a dialect? We must all have felt that way about Robert Burns at one time or another. Unfortunately, the answer is that he had to write in Scots in order not to produce watered-down versions of Gray's *Elegy*. A hasty look at his poems in standard English will confirm this, but does not entirely explain it. We must go behind Burns; there we find a tradition, half-literary, half-folk, stretching clear back to the Middle Ages and resistant to more modern influences simply because of that thick Scots burr.

The Calvinist Reformation, it is true, spoke a native idiom, but the Renaissance, mercantilism, Deism, many other anti-medieval movements, spoke in Scotland with a finicking English accent. That is why, if we are looking for a satisfactory parallel to Burns outside Scotland, we have to go to Villon, to the Goliardic poets, to Irish Gaelic writers like O'Bruadair. In Scotland he had a thin line of predecessors, stretching from the fifteenth-century Dunbar

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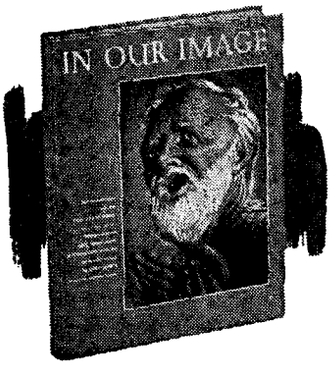

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and Henryson through Sempill of Beltrees to Allan Ramsay and Robert Fergusson. Naturally, when a genius like Burns comes along to use a tradition as it has never been used before, people tend to forget all the lesser men who accumulated and passed on the materials for his masterpieces. Homer, for example, is clearly the end of one long development as well as the beginning of another, but nothing by his forerunners has come down to us.

Professor Daiches, however, knows as much about the Scottish literary tradition as he does about Burns, and puts his sitter in perspective in the first chapter. Later, as he examines all the major poems in detail, he compares them with their models (most frequently taken from Fergusson, a really fine poet, well worth reading for his own sake). In fact, his scholarship is impeccable, but that is not the main reason why you ought to read his book.

He deserves a nobler title than scholar—that of humanist. To criticize the work of a poet as lyrical as Burns is in his songs requires a sensibility that all the graduate-school courses in the world cannot inculcate. Furthermore, Burns has an intellectual, satirical side very reminiscent of Villon, which lies in wait for the unwary reader even in his love poetry, as it does in John Donne's. Finally, no critic can do justice to Burns who cannot understand and respect him as a man who, with all his failings, was never a sot, never a mere sensualist, and survived with unblemished integrity the kind of notoriety that destroys personality daily in Hollywood and along Broadway.

Professor Daiches, as his book reveals him, possesses the necessary qualities of sensibility, intellect and humanity in full measure. Nor, in spite of his somewhat whisky-laden peroration, does he altogether idolize his poet. One of the shrewdest pieces of analysis in the book is that which shows how Burns played up to the prejudices of the Edinburgh literati in selecting the contents of the Kilmarnock volume. For his first public appearance Burns chose to seem a good deal more rustic and untutored than in fact he was. Though regarding himself as a critic rather than a biographer, Professor Daiches draws an unforgettable likeness of his hero.

As far as I know, no critical study has done fuller justice to Burns' work as a song-writer or supplied more information about it than the last chapter of this book, which includes half a dozen pages wherein Professor Daiches discusses Burns' bawdy poetry without losing his dignity or forfeiting our sympathy for Burns. The publishers are to be congratulated on choosing this work to inaugurate their "Rinehart Critical Studies" series; they will find it hard indeed to continue as brilliantly as they have begun.

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• REVIEWERS •

HAROLD C. HINTON is a member of the Georgetown University faculty. His special field is Far Eastern affairs.

HELENE ISWOLSKY is a native Russian and a lecturer for the Russian Institute at Fordham. She edits *The Third Hour,* and is the author of several books on Russia and Communism.

VIVIAN MERCIER teaches literature courses at Columbia and the City College of New York.

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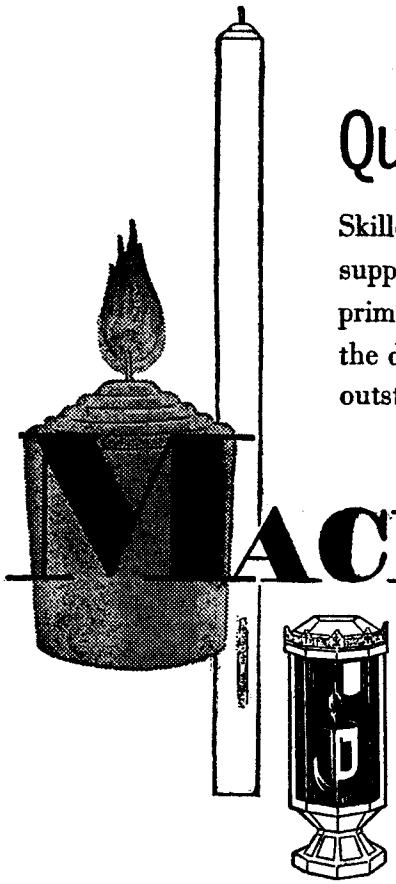

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NOT ALL GREET LENT

like this happy monk, but actually we all know that it is supposed to be a season of Grace not a season of Gloom. So how excellent that Catholic Book Week comes in the middle of it to suggest ways of increasing grace and (if necessary) decreasing gloom. It seems a good moment for a check on how many of the books you meant to read in the last year actually got read. Here's a list to look over.

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If we dare guess by the amount sold, probably nobody reading this missed Father Leo Trese's account of a day in his life as a parish priest, **VESSEL OF CLAY** ($2.00), so now continue your study of the priesthood with a completely different kind of book, **EVERYBODY CALLS ME FATHER** ($2.25) by Father X, a lighthearted young priest writing on his first five years in the priesthood. Read this for Laetare Sunday, and you will sail through the rest of Lent. You can gather a good deal about another priest, by the way, by reading Msgr. Knox's **THE MASS, THE CREED,** and **THE GOSPEL IN SLOW MOTION** ($2.50 each), but, of course, not so much as you will about the Mass, the Creed and the Sunday Gospels.

A new book that is really not new (it was written in Latin when Shakespeare was writing plays) is **THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST** ($3.75) by John of St. Thomas, translated by Dominic Hughes, O.P., and introduced by Walter Farrell, O.P. This is a classic and is wonderful if you have the teeth for it, but let no one suppose it is light reading.

WHAT BECOMES OF THE DEAD? ($3.50) by Dr. Arendzen is a reprint of a book first published around 20 years ago, but it's still the clearest description of as much as we know about the state of souls in heaven and hell, purgatory and limbo, both now and as they will be after the resurrection of the dead.

If you have read all these, let's come to a few of the books published so far this season—**EVERYBODY CALLS ME FATHER** ($2.25) slipped in already, the others are Msgr. Knox's book on St. Paul's special contribution to our knowledge of Our Lord: **ST. PAUL'S GOSPEL** ($1.75) (how Msgr. Knox does love St. Paul!), **FOR GOODNESS' SAKE** ($2.25) by William Lawson, S.J., on the attractiveness of goodness, a very pleasant and persuasive book, and if you are (like us) a fool for apologias, there's **ROMAN ROAD** ($2.25) by George Lamb, a young man born in a Manchester slum, educated on scholarships, whose arrival in the Church still seems to surprise him. There are a dozen more books out, or about to come out, this Spring, and no room here to tell you about all of them, so write to Lucy MacGill and ask her to send you the February-March issue of Sheed & Ward's **OWN TRUMPET.** In addition to the usual new and reprinted book reviews, extracts from books and news of authors, this contains our whole Spring list.

In the meantime, don't forget that to go with the Knox **LATIN-ENGLISH MISSAL** we now have a Knox **HOLY WEEK BOOK.** This is in Msgr. Knox's translation throughout, and costs $2.50. If you want one, order it right away—if we run out of stock we can't possibly get more ready in time for Holy Week this year.

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